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United Nations

United Nations Forum on Forests

Report on the thirteenth session (5 May 2017 and 7 to 11 May 2018)

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Note

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Chapter I

Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention

A. Draft decision for adoption by the Council

1. The United Nations Forum on Forests recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft decision:

Report of the United Nations Forum on Forests on its thirteenth session and provisional agenda for its fourteenth session

The Economic and Social Council:

(a) Takes note of the report of the United Nations Forum on Forests on its thirteenth session;[1]

(b) Approves the provisional agenda for the fourteenth session of the Forum as set out below:

Provisional agenda for the fourteenth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030:
   (a) Technical discussion and exchange of experiences on the thematic and operational priorities, priority actions and resource needs for the period 2019–2020, taking into account the review cycle of the high-level political forum on sustainable development during the biennium and the theme of the International Day of Forests;
   (b) Voluntary announcement of voluntary national contributions;
   (c) United Nations system-wide contributions to the implementation of the global forest goals and targets.
4. Monitoring, assessment and reporting:
   (a) Progress on the implementation of the strategic plan, including the United Nations forest instrument and voluntary national contributions;
   (b) Progress on the development of global forest indicators.
5. Means of implementation: progress on the activities and the operation of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network and availability of resources.
6. Enhancing global forest policy coherence and a common international understanding of sustainable forest management.
7. Enhanced cooperation, coordination and engagement on forest-related issues:

[1] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2018, Supplement No. 22* (E/2018/42).

(a) Activities of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests in support of the strategic plan and the quadrennial programme of work for the period 2017–2020;

(b) United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change implementation of the Paris Agreement;

(c) Convention on Biological Diversity: Aichi Biodiversity Targets;

(d) Regional and subregional partners;

(e) Major groups and other relevant stakeholders;

(f) Communication and outreach activities;

(g) Cross-sectoral engagement;

(h) Information on intersessional activities.

8. Emerging issues and challenges.

9. Trust fund for the United Nations Forum on Forests.

10. Information on the reform of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs pertaining to the Forum.

11. Date and venue for the fifteenth session of the Forum.

12. Provisional agenda for the fifteenth session of the Forum.

13. Adoption of the report of the Forum on its fourteenth session.

B. Resolution brought to the attention of the Council

2. The following resolution adopted by the United Nations Forum on Forests at its thirteenth session is brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Council:

Resolution 13/1
Outcome of the thirteenth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests

The United Nations Forum on Forests,

Recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35 of 18 October 2000, in which the Council established the United Nations Forum on Forests as an intergovernmental body with universal membership, supported by a compact secretariat, constituted in accordance with established rules and procedures of the United Nations, and Council resolution 2015/33 of 22 July 2015 on the international arrangement on forests beyond 2015, in which the arrangement was strengthened and extended to 2030,

Recalling also Council resolution 2017/4 of 20 April 2017 on the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 and quadrennial programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests for the period 2017–2020, in which the Council recognized communication and outreach as essential components of the strategic plan and the need to raise awareness, within and outside the forest sector, of the vital contribution of all types of forests and trees to life on Earth and human well-being,

Recalling further resolution 12/1 of 5 May 2017, adopted at the twelfth session of the Forum,

I
Implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030

1. *Welcomes* the announcements by several members of the United Nations Forum on Forests of their initial voluntary national contributions to achieving one or more of the global forest goals and targets set out in the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030,[1] and encourages other members to make their announcements at the fourteenth session of the Forum and to communicate them beforehand to the Forum secretariat through appropriate channels;

2. *Requests* the Forum secretariat to compile, in a publicly accessible and centralized repository, all announcements of voluntary national contributions communicated to the secretariat;

3. *Emphasizes* the importance of communication efforts relating to the strategic plan, including highlighting and sharing best practices and success stories on the implementation of the strategic plan and the United Nations forest instrument[2] and creating synergies with other multilateral communication platforms and strategies, and to that end, adopts the communication and outreach strategy as contained in annex I to the present resolution;

4. *Requests* the Forum secretariat to report on progress in implementing the communication and outreach strategy to the Forum at its fourteenth and subsequent sessions, and to produce, from within existing resources, a concise print and online publication on the global forest goals and targets, featuring infographics, to be used in outreach to a range of audiences within and outside the forest community;

5. *Reiterates* the importance of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls to the implementation of the strategic plan, with a view to accelerating sustainable development;

6. *Reaffirms* that the effective implementation of sustainable forest management depends on the contributions of all the relevant stakeholders, including forest owners, indigenous peoples and local communities, local authorities, the private sector, including small, medium and large forest-based enterprises, non-governmental organizations, women, children and youth and scientific, academic and philanthropic organizations at all levels;

7. *Recognizes* that by 2050 at least two thirds of the world's population will be living in urban areas, and stresses the need to integrate forest areas and trees into urban landscapes as an essential aspect of urban planning and development;

II
Monitoring, assessment and reporting

8. *Welcomes* the pilot testing of the draft format for voluntary national reporting to the Forum on progress towards the implementation of the strategic plan, including the United Nations forest instrument and voluntary national contributions, and other relevant intersessional work, and on this basis adopts the format for initial voluntary national reporting contained in annex I to the note by the Secretariat,[3] recognizing that the format is an evolving instrument that can be improved and refined on the basis of experience gained;

9. *Decides* that the Forum will consider the results of the first round of voluntary national reporting at its fifteenth session, in 2020, and invites members of

[1] See General Assembly resolution 71/285.
[2] See General Assembly resolutions 62/98 and 70/199.
[3] E/CN.18/2018/4.

the Forum to submit their voluntary national reports to the Forum secretariat by mid-November 2019 using the format referred to above;

10. *Also decides* that the Forum at its fifteenth session will consider the timing of the next round of reporting, bearing in mind the midterm review by the Forum of the international arrangement on forests in 2024;

11. *Emphasizes* the value of making effective use of the information provided by members through their voluntary national reporting, and to that end requests the Forum secretariat to prepare, on the basis of the initial round of reporting and in consultation with members of the Forum, member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and relevant stakeholders, a concise "flagship" publication on progress towards achieving the global forest goals and targets for release by the end of 2021, using existing resources, suitable for a range of audiences within and outside the forest sector, and also requests the secretariat to report on planning in that regard to the Forum at its fifteenth session;

12. *Welcomes* the progress made in developing a global core set of forest-related indicators aligned with the seven thematic elements of sustainable forest management, and acknowledges the value of such a core set of indicators in assessing progress towards achieving the global forest goals and targets and other internationally agreed forest-related goals and targets and in better focusing data collection efforts in order to reduce duplication;

13. *Encourages* member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and other relevant bodies to apply those indicators from the global core set which are ready for use, and requests the Partnership to continue to develop the remaining indicators and report on progress in that regard to the Forum at its fourteenth session;

III
Means of implementation

14. *Welcomes* the opportunity for enhanced forest funding under the seventh replenishment of the Global Environment Facility trust fund (July 2018–June 2022), as well as additional opportunities provided under the focal area strategies for the Rio conventions;

15. *Also welcomes* the funding made available through the Green Climate Fund forests and land use results area, as well as the launching of the pilot programme for results-based payments for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries (REDD-plus), and invites the Fund to designate a staff member to liaise with the Forum secretariat to promote cooperation under the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network, consistent with the Fund's mandate;

16. *Further welcomes* the progress made in operationalizing the Network and the intersessional work on enhancing the Network's effectiveness, and on that basis adopts the guidelines for the operation of the Network as contained in annex II to the present resolution;

17. *Requests* the Forum secretariat, in consultation with interested members of the Forum and members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, to initiate development of the Network's online clearing house mechanism referred to in the guidelines, bearing in mind the benefits of a step-wise approach, and to undertake the following additional measures to improve the Network's effectiveness and efficiency and build capacity in financing sustainable forest management:

(a) Develop a generic guide and a modular training package to assist countries in developing national forest financing strategies;

(b) Share information on lessons learned and best practices on resource mobilization for forests;

18. *Stresses* the importance of the Network in facilitating national efforts to accelerate the implementation of the global forest goals and forest-related Sustainable Development Goals and the need for continued and increased funding for the Network, and in this regard invites members of the Forum and others in a position to do so to provide voluntary contributions to the Forum trust fund to meet the growing demand by members and to scale up the activities of the Network;

19. *Notes with appreciation* the offer of the Government of China to establish and make operational a Forum secretariat office for the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network in Beijing, and requests the Forum secretariat to provide further details and regular reporting on possible arrangements for, and operation of, the proposed office, taking into account the ongoing broader reforms in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat and budget implications;

IV
United Nations system-wide contribution to the implementation of the strategic plan

20. *Welcomes* the outcome of the international conference on the theme "Working across sectors to halt deforestation and increase forest area: from aspiration to action", organized by the Collaborative Partnership on Forests in Rome from 20 to 22 February 2018;[4]

21. *Also welcomes* the Collaborative Partnership on Forests workplan 2017–2020, invites the governing bodies of the member organizations of the Partnership to support implementation of the workplan, consistent with their mandates, and requests the Partnership to report progress in implementing the workplan to the Forum at its fourteenth and fifteenth sessions;

22. *Further welcomes* the secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora as a member of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests;

23. *Invites* national Forum focal points to engage their national-level counterparts responsible for the Rio conventions and the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat to seek to enhance collaboration and synergies in the implementation of their respective commitments;

24. *Welcomes* initiatives taken at the regional and subregional levels to implement the strategic plan, and invites regional and subregional organizations and processes to make full use of the regional forums on sustainable development held in preparation for sessions of the high-level political forum on sustainable development,

25. *Invites* the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to provide the Forum at its fourteenth session with an update of the consideration by the Committee on Forestry at its twenty-fourth session of the potential offered by the regional forestry commissions, as appropriate, for enhancing regional and/or subregional involvement;

26. *Welcomes* the joint workplan developed by major groups to accelerate achievement of the global forest goals and the complementary workplan developed by the children and youth major group, invites major groups to inform the Forum at

[4] See E/CN.18/2018/8, annex.

its fourteenth session on progress made in implementing their workplans, and invites members in a position to do to support major groups in that regard;

V
Contribution of the Forum to the high-level political forum on sustainable development review in 2018

27. *Recognizes* that the strategic plan lays a solid foundation for accelerating sustainable development and that its implementation will make a crucial contribution to the transformation towards resilient and sustainable societies, both rural and urban;

28. *Invites* the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2018 to recognize the implementation of the strategic plan and achieving its global forest goals and targets as an effective means to accelerate progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and associated targets;

29. *Emphasizes* the relevance of the Forum's policy dialogue at its thirteenth session to the review by the high-level political forum, and requests the Chair of the Forum to finalize and transmit his summary of the dialogue to the high-level political forum as an input to its 2018 review;

30. *Welcomes* the initiative of the Bureau of the thirteenth session of the Forum to organize a one-day event on forests prior to the session of the high-level political forum in July 2018 to stimulate partnerships and synergies among stakeholders in order to accelerate achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 15 as well as the other Goals under review, and invites interested members of the Forum to contribute to and participate in the event;

VI
Preparations for the high-level political forum review in 2019

31. *Requests* the Forum secretariat to prepare, in consultation with members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, a document containing proposals on the contribution of forests to accelerating progress in achieving Sustainable Development Goal 13, as well as background analytical studies on the contribution of forests to other Goals under review by the high-level political forum in 2019, for consideration by the Forum at its fourteenth session;

32. *Invites* members of the Forum, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and its member organizations, United Nations system partners and regional, subregional and major group partners to undertake initiatives to accelerate the contribution of forests to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals under review in 2019 and inform the Forum of progress made at its fourteenth session;

33. *Decides* that the Forum at its fourteenth session will finalize its substantive input to the high-level political forum in 2019, taking into account the inputs provided to the Forum;

VII
Information on reform of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs pertaining to the Forum

Mindful of, and without prejudice to the reform process of the United Nations development system and General Assembly resolution 70/299 of 29 July 2016 on the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level,

Recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, in which the Council established the Forum as an intergovernmental body with universal

membership, serviced by a compact secretariat, with funding for the functioning of the Forum and its secretariat provided from the regular United Nations budget, within existing resources, resources from organizations participating in the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and extrabudgetary resources provided by interested donors,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 57/282 of 20 December 2002, in which the Assembly established a new subprogramme, entitled "Sustainable forest development", under the programme entitled "Economic and social affairs",

Recalling further Council resolution 2015/33 on the international arrangement on forests beyond 2015, composed of the United Nations Forum on Forests and its member States, the secretariat of the Forum, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network and the trust fund for the Forum, with a view to strengthening the international arrangement and extending it to 2030,

Recalling that one of the objectives of the international arrangement on forests is to enhance the contribution of all types of forests and trees outside forests to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[5]

1. *Notes* the adoption by the General Assembly of the United Nations forest instrument, in 2007, and the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030, with the mission to promote sustainable forest management and the contribution of forests and trees outside forests to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including by strengthening cooperation, coordination, coherence, synergies and political commitment and action at all levels;

2. *Recognizes* the progress on implementation of the strategic plan, as well as the achievements to date of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network;

3. *Stresses* the importance of maintaining the current and future ability of the United Nations Forum on Forests and the subprogramme entitled "Sustainable forest management" of the programme entitled "Economic and social affairs" to fulfil the Forum's important mandate and role, and reaffirms their intergovernmentally agreed mandates.

Annex I
Communication and outreach strategy of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030

I. Introduction

1. As outlined in the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030, communication and outreach are essential components of the strategic plan. The present strategy could assist in planning communication and outreach activities for all actors with roles and responsibilities in implementing the strategic plan.

2. The communication and outreach strategy aims:

(a) To raise awareness of forests and trees as being vital to life on Earth and human well-being: activities should aim at raising awareness, within and outside the forest sector, of the vital contribution of all types of forests and trees to life on Earth and human well-being;

(b) To promote sustainable forest management: communication efforts should highlight best practices and success stories on the implementation of the strategic plan and the United Nations forest instrument, promote greater common understanding of sustainable forest management, within and outside the forest sector, and provide inspiration with regard to where additional action is needed;

[5] General Assembly resolution 70/1.

(c) To raise awareness of the global forest goals and encourage implementation of the strategic plan: to achieve the goals and targets, and implement the strategic plan, all actors with roles and responsibilities in implementing the plan need to be aware of what the strategic plan and its goals and targets are, and how to engage and take action to foster implementation. In this regard, communication and outreach activities to disseminate information on capacity development and means of implementation in support of the strategic plan could be useful;

(d) To amplify communications from the forest community: the strategic plan encourages the United Nations system, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and its member organizations and other partners to enhance cooperation and synergies on communication and outreach to increase the impact of their messaging within and outside the forest sector, and to consider joint events and products with national, regional, subregional and non-governmental organizations and processes.

II. Target audiences

Member States

3. The actions and commitments of member States are decisive for the implementation of the strategic plan and the achievement of its goals and targets. National focal points for the United Nations Forum on Forests are ideally positioned to disseminate the strategic plan to national decision-makers, other ministries, departments, national political and scientific authorities and local and municipal authorities involved in forests. Furthermore, the voluntary national contributions announced by member States can serve to raise awareness of the strategic plan, and of actions to achieve the global forest goals and targets.

United Nations system, members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and international and regional organizations

4. The goals and targets of the strategic plan aim to galvanize action and enhance collaboration on forests within the United Nations system and among members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, as well as other forest-related international, regional and subregional organizations and processes. Those organizations are target audiences and should be encouraged to integrate the goals and targets into their forest-related plans and programmes, disseminate the strategic plan to their networks within and outside the forest sector, and promote greater recognition of forest contributions to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Major groups and other stakeholders

5. The strategic plan recognizes the importance of action by major groups and other stakeholders, including forest owners, indigenous peoples, local communities, local authorities, the private sector (including small, medium and large forest-based enterprises), non-governmental organizations, women, children, youth and scientific, academic and philanthropic organizations in raising awareness, fostering the exchange of information and disseminating the strategic plan. In that regard, communication and outreach should encourage all stakeholders to promote their activities in the context of the national implementation of the strategic plan. At the same time, success stories and best practices from local communities can provide inspiring messages for action on the ground.

Influencers/opinion-makers/communication networks

6. Influencers, opinion-makers, media and communication networks can spread the word and identify communication gaps, niches and opportunities. Various

networks of communicators already exist within the United Nations system and at the regional level that can be important target audiences, including the regional forestry networks of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the communicators group of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and the United Nations information centres of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat.

The public

7. Communication efforts should promote public awareness and action towards the national achievement of the global forest goals and targets. It is important to note that public perceptions on forests tend to vary on the basis of national circumstances and factors such as gender, socioeconomic level and language.

III. Messages

8. Messages should highlight efforts of member States, the United Nations system, members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, regional organizations, major groups and other stakeholders in implementing the strategic plan. Messages should create connections and communicate the idea that forests sustain the daily lives of people everywhere, including in urban environments. Messages should also raise awareness of threats that impact forests and the benefits of sustainably managing them.

9. Messages should support the overarching vision of the strategic plan and the central role of the United Nations Forum on Forests in providing a voice for sustainable forest management and in promoting awareness of the contribution of forests to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals.

10. The strategic plan contains many such messages on the contributions of forests, for example:

(a) An estimated 1.6 billion people, or 25 per cent of the global population, depend on forests for subsistence, livelihood, employment and income generation;

(b) Forests provide essential ecosystem services, such as timber, food, fuel, fodder, non-wood products and shelter, and contribute to soil and water conservation and clean air;

(c) Forests prevent land degradation and desertification and reduce the risk of floods, landslides, avalanches, droughts, dust storms, sandstorms and other natural disasters;

(d) Forests are home to an estimated 80 per cent of all terrestrial species;

(e) Forests contribute substantially to climate change mitigation and adaptation and to the conservation of biodiversity;

(f) When sustainably managed, all types of forests are healthy, productive, resilient and renewable ecosystems, providing essential goods and services to people worldwide.

11. Messages could focus on creating "brand recognition" of the six global forest goals, and showcase voluntary national contributions and efforts by all actors that are made in support of the goals and targets.

IV. Methods and activities

12. Key determinants for successful communication activities often include the need for political will, the capacity to communicate effectively, adequate resources, a clear communication strategy with aims and objectives, messages based on solid

evidence, stakeholder engagement and partnerships. Methods and activities to carry out the communication and outreach strategy could include the measures set out below.

Websites

13. In the digital age, websites provide a cost-effective platform for information dissemination to global audiences. The website of the United Nations Forum on Forests could be redesigned and restructured to include graphic elements on forests, to provide a central platform for targeted communications on the strategic plan for different audiences, within and outside the forest sector, in a manner consistent with United Nations website standards. Member States, the United Nations system, members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, regional organizations, major groups and other stakeholders would also be encouraged to create dedicated webpages on their organizational websites that showcase their actions to implement the strategic plan, including through translating the plan into local languages. The Forum website could then link to those national and organizational pages.

Social media

14. Social media offers a direct channel to share and exchange information with large audiences, in particular civil society networks and the public. The Forum secretariat provides a core set of social media messaging for the sessions of the Forum, in consultation with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Department of Public Information, to be adapted and retransmitted by all actors. Member States, the United Nations system, members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and stakeholders would be encouraged to share their social media advisories to enable greater amplification of such campaigns.

Logo/branding

15. The Graphic Design Unit of the Department of Public Information has prepared a logo for the global forest goals that is based on branding of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The logo forms the core visual for branding purposes, and should be consistently utilized in messaging and communication products at all levels.

Events

16. **International conferences and meetings.** Large international environmental conferences have traditionally been the focus of forest communications; however, it is also important to target meetings that attract other relevant sectors, such as agriculture, energy and water. Given the mission of the strategic plan to highlight the contribution of forests to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the annual meetings of the high-level political forum on sustainable development, and other high-level intergovernmental forest-related bodies, provide an important opportunity to raise awareness of the strategic plan and its relevance to the discussions at these forums. The organization of "forest days" at such conferences and meetings could provide an opportunity to showcase the cross-sectoral benefits and services provided by forests.

17. **International days.** The International Day of Forests on 21 March provides a powerful platform for public outreach activities on forests. Other United Nations international days also provide an opportunity to highlight the multifaceted contributions of forests, including World Environment Day, International Mother Earth Day, World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought, World Water Day, World Wetlands Day and World Wildlife Day.

18. **International decades.** There are a number of international decades on topics relevant to forests that could provide opportunities for coordinated communication

and outreach. They include the United Nations Decade of Family Farming 2019–2028; the International Decade for Action, "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018–2028; the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition 2016–2025; the United Nations Decade of Sustainable Energy for All 2014–2024; and the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity 2011–2020.

19. Cultural events featuring forests in the visual arts, literary arts and the performing arts, such as music, theatre, dance and film, could provide useful communication and outreach opportunities.

20. Educational events aimed at children and youth could also provide useful communication and outreach opportunities.

Advocates/messengers

21. Engaging celebrities, opinion-makers and community leaders, including United Nations Goodwill Ambassadors and United Nations Messengers of Peace, to lend their voices to mobilize support from the public can help to amplify messages and make them relevant to contemporary culture.

V. Success criteria

22. Monitoring the impact of communication and outreach activities carried out in relation to the global forest goals and targets of the strategic plan is critical for the long-term success and effectiveness of such activities. At the global level, voluntary national reporting to the Forum contains a wealth of information that can be used to track communication and outreach activities being conducted by member States in support of the implementation of the strategic plan. The information could also be useful to identify gaps and challenges where more work is needed.

23. The strategic plan serves as a reference framework for the forest-related work of the United Nations system. In this regard, it is important to share information on the communication and outreach activities of the United Nations system and partners in support of the global forest goals and targets of the strategic plan.

24. Different target audiences respond to different methods of communication, so repackaging communications in different ways, from multimedia campaigns to publications, as part of communications campaigns would make it possible to compare which types of content were most utilized.

25. Given the changing landscape of communication methods, the communication and outreach strategy is an evolving document which could be reviewed and updated, as needed.

Annex II
Guidelines for the operation of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network of the United Nations Forum on Forests

Rationale

The essential contribution of forests and sustainable forest management to sustainable development is recognized in Sustainable Development Goal 15 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Sustainable forest management is widely considered vital to achieving all 17 Sustainable Development Goals, including poverty eradication. The adoption by the General Assembly of the first ever United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 underscores this contribution through six global forest goals and 26 targets which build on the United Nations forest instrument adopted in 2007. These global forest commitments can be achieved only through enhanced financial resources from all sources and at all levels. While

significant international public financing for forests has become available in the past decade, primarily in the climate change context, many countries lack the resources and capacity needed to implement sustainable forest management. To help unlock and facilitate access to these resources, as well as enhance the use of existing resources and build the capacity needed, the Economic and Social Council launched the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network in 2015 on the basis of a recommendation of the United Nations Forum on Forests at its eleventh session.

1. Purpose and priorities

The Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network of the United Nations Forum on Forests, in close cooperation with members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, contributes to the scaling up of sustainable forest management by facilitating access for countries to resources to implement the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 and to achieve its global forest goals and targets. To this end, the priorities for the Network are the following:

- To promote and assist members of the Forum in designing national forest financing strategies to mobilize resources for sustainable forest management, including existing national initiatives, within the framework of national forest programmes or other appropriate national frameworks.
- To assist countries in mobilizing, accessing and enhancing the effective use of existing financial resources from all sources for sustainable forest management, taking into account national policies and strategies.
- To serve as a clearing house and database on existing, new and emerging financing opportunities and as a tool for sharing lessons learned and best practices from successful projects, building on the Collaborative Partnership on Forests online sourcebook for forest financing.
- To contribute to the achievement of the global forest goals and targets, as well as priorities contained in the Forum's quadrennial programmes of work.

2. Principles

- The Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network is an integral part of the United Nations Forum on Forests. It operates under the auspices and general guidance of the Forum and is accountable to the Forum.
- As its name clearly implies, the Network is a facilitation mechanism. It complements the work of funding institutions but does not fund programmes or projects directly.
- The Network's priorities will be carried out in a balanced, transparent and effective manner.
- The operation of the Network will be consistent with the applicable rules and regulations of the United Nations.
- The Network will also promote cross-sectoral and integrated approaches to domestic and international forest financing, including with the private sector, and capacity-building in this regard.
- The Network's activities will promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and the involvement and participation of major groups and other stakeholders where appropriate.
- The Network's activities will be guided by the principles set out in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, including the principle of national ownership.

3. Management

- The secretariat of the Forum manages the Network under the leadership of the Director of the secretariat and implements the Network's activities in collaboration with relevant members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests.

4. Eligibility

- All members of the Forum which are developing countries or countries with economies in transition are eligible to request assistance through the Network.
- Special consideration should be given to the special needs and circumstances of Africa, the least developed countries, countries with low forest cover, countries with high forest cover, countries with medium forest cover and low deforestation, and small island developing States, as well as countries with economies in transition, in gaining access to funds.

5. Procedures

(a) Requests for assistance:

- Eligible members interested in receiving assistance through the Network should submit expressions of interest to the secretariat from their Ministers responsible for forests or their designee or, where appropriate, through diplomatic channels.
- The secretariat should respond to such expressions of interest in a timely manner, advising on the consistency of requests with Network priorities and principles and on the availability of resources.
- Where requests are consistent with Network priorities and principles and resources are available, the requesting country should share with the secretariat information on its national strategies and priorities.
- In line with these national strategies and priorities and on the basis of a preliminary appraisal mission if needed, the secretariat and requesting country should agree in writing on the specific terms of the assistance and any follow-up advice, including responsibilities, time frame, expected outputs and possible involvement of major groups and other stakeholders.

(b) Allocation of Network resources:

- In allocating resources, the secretariat should take into account the need to assist as many countries as possible and equitable geographic distribution.
- If sufficient resources are not available, the secretariat should maintain a waiting list of pending requests and should periodically confirm the continued relevancy of such requests with the requesting country.
- The secretariat may propose for the Forum's consideration additional procedures as needed to ensure the effective, efficient and transparent allocation of resources, including eligibility criteria for priority setting.
- Management of Network resources should be consistent with the financial rules and accounting standards of the United Nations.

6. Partnerships

- The secretariat may develop collaborative arrangements and partnerships with organizations at various levels to facilitate and enhance Network operations from all sources. These may include:

- The Global Environment Facility, the Green Climate Fund, international financial institutions, development assistance agencies and philanthropic and private investment organizations;
- The secretariats of the Rio conventions and other members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and United Nations organizations;
- Regional and subregional organizations and processes;
- Major groups and other stakeholders.

- Where relevant, such partnerships should aim to strengthen collaboration at the national, subregional and regional levels.

7. Clearing house

- The secretariat should develop, without duplicating existing efforts, the Network's online clearing house in consultation with interested members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, with a view to providing:
  - A comprehensive up-to-date database on forest financing opportunities from all sources for sustainable forest management, drawing and building on existing initiatives and sources of information, including information on procedures for accessing resources;
  - A web-based interactive platform for the exchange of data, lessons learned and best practices among users, including, for example, on project conceptualization;
  - A source of data for assessing progress on target 15.b of the Sustainable Development Goals and global forest goal 4.
- The secretariat should establish and maintain a network of regular data providers to the clearing house which should not entail new national reporting requirements.

8. Funding and resource mobilization for the effective functioning of the Network

- The Network will be supported by, inter alia, extrabudgetary resources provided through the Forum trust fund.
- The Forum:
  - Recognizes that sufficient financial, technical and human resources will help to ensure the effective functioning of the Network, including timely responses to requests for assistance;
  - Encourages members and others in a position to do so to provide voluntary contributions to the Forum trust fund to support enhanced activities under the Network;
  - Invites members of the Forum and members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests to provide secondments to the secretariat to support the work of the Network.
- The secretariat will:
  - Work closely with members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, including through the Partnership's workplans, and other cooperating organizations and financing mechanisms to identify opportunities to leverage co-financing and in-kind contributions;

- Actively explore opportunities for funding support from other sources, including United Nations technical assistance programmes, regional and subregional organizations, the private sector and philanthropic organizations;
- Seek the Forum's guidance as needed on measures for mobilizing adequate resources for effective Network operations;
- Ensure the efficient and effective use of the Network's resources.

9. Reporting and communication

- The secretariat should provide an annual report to the Forum on the Network's activities, partnerships, lessons learned, financial management and administrative arrangements and the workplan for the coming year.
- The Forum will provide guidance on the content of annual reports as needed to ensure transparency.
- The secretariat, as requested, will provide donors with information on the use of their voluntary contributions to the Forum trust fund earmarked for the Network.
- The secretariat should highlight the Network in its communication and outreach strategy and through various communication tools, including posting regular updates of Network activities on the Forum website.

10. Follow-up and evaluation of the Network's activities

- The Forum will annually:
  - Monitor and assess the work and performance of the Network, including reviewing and advising on the availability of Forum trust fund resources;
  - Ensure that the operation of the Network is consistent with these guidelines.
- On the basis of guidance provided by the Forum, the secretariat should arrange for a transparent independent evaluation of the effectiveness and efficiency of the Network's operations as part of the midterm review in 2024 referred to below and should develop indicators, including stakeholder-specific indicators, in this regard.

11. Review of the guidelines

The Forum will review these guidelines in 2024 in the context of the midterm review of the international arrangement on forests and revise them as needed.

C. Decisions brought to the attention of the Council

3. The following decisions adopted by the United Nations Forum on Forests at its thirteenth session are brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Council:

Decision 13/101
Dates and venue of the fourteenth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests

The United Nations Forum on Forests, recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33 of 22 July 2015, decides that the fourteenth session of the Forum will be held at Headquarters from 6 to 10 May 2019.

Decision 13/102
Documentation considered by the United Nations Forum on Forests at its thirteenth session

The United Nations Forum on Forests takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on progress in the implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33 (E/CN.18/2018/6).

Chapter II

Implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030

(a) Policy dialogue on the thematic and operational priorities, priority actions and resource needs for the period 2017–2018, taking into account the review cycle of the high-level political forum on sustainable development during the biennium and the theme of the International Day of Forests

(b) Voluntary announcement of voluntary national contributions

(c) United Nations system-wide contributions to the implementation of the global forest goals and targets

(d) Development of the communication and outreach strategy for the strategic plan

4. The Forum considered agenda item 3 and its sub-items (a) to (d) at its 2nd to 5th, 7th and 8th meetings, from 7 to 10 May 2018 and jointly with items 4 and 5 at its 9th to 11th meetings, from 10 to 11 May 2018. For its consideration of the item, the Forum had before it the notes by the Secretariat on the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 (E/CN.18/2018/2); and on the contribution of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and its member organizations, regional and subregional organizations and processes, major groups and other stakeholders to the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 (E/CN.18/2018/3).

5. At the 2nd meeting, on 7 May, the representative of the Forum secretariat introduced the note by the Secretariat under the item (E/CN.18/2018/2).

6. At the 9th meeting, on 10 May, the representative of the Forum secretariat introduced the note by the Secretariat under the item (E/CN.18/2018/3).

Action taken by the Forum

7. At its 9th meeting, on 10 May, the Forum held a discussion on the draft resolution, wherein statements were made by the representatives of Egypt (on behalf of the Group of 77 and China), Nigeria (on behalf of the African Group), Switzerland, Mexico, Ukraine, China, the United States of America and Australia, as well as by the observer of the European Union.

8. At the same meeting, statements were made by the Secretary and by the representative of the secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests.

9. At its 10th meeting, on 11 May, the Forum had before it a draft resolution of the thirteenth session of the Forum, submitted by the Bureau on the basis of informal consultations, which was circulated in an informal paper, in English only, under agenda item 3 (Implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030), item 4 (Monitoring, assessment and reporting) and item 5 (Means of implementation: progress on the activities and the operation of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network).

10. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of the United States, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria (on behalf of the African States), Costa Rica, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Jamaica, Switzerland, Ukraine, Algeria, Pakistan, Egypt (on behalf of the Group of 77 and China), the Russian Federation, Japan, Bahamas, the Islamic Republic of Iran, China and Bangladesh, as well as by the observer of the European Union.

11. At the 11th meeting, on 11 May, the Chair (Malaysia) made a statement.

12. At the same meeting, the Secretary of the Forum read out a statement on the financial implications of the draft resolution.

13. Also at the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Algeria, India, Switzerland, the Russian Federation, the United States, Indonesia, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Nigeria (on behalf of the African States) and Ukraine, as well as by the observer of the European Union and by the representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

14. Also at its 11th meeting, on 11 May, the Chair made a statement.

15. At the same meeting, the Forum adopted the draft resolution as orally revised (see chap. I, sect. B, resolution 13/1).

16. After the adoption of the draft resolution, statements were made by the representatives of the United States and Nigeria (on behalf of the African States), as well as by the representative of the non-governmental organizations major group.

General statements under the item

17. At its 2nd meeting, on 7 May, the Forum heard general statements by the representatives of Egypt (on behalf of the Group of 77 and China) and Nigeria (on behalf of the African Group), as well as by the observer for the European Union.

18. At the 5th meeting, on 8 May, the Forum resumed its general discussion under the item and heard statements by the representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel, Brazil, the State of Palestine, Malaysia (on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations), Indonesia, Algeria, India and Guinea.

19. At the 7th meeting, on 9 May, statements were made by the representatives of Japan and Nigeria. A statement was made by the observer of the Commission of Central African Forests, as well as by the representative of the children and youth major group.

20. At the 8th meeting, on 10 May, statements were made by the representatives of Zambia, El Salvador, Thailand, Lesotho, Brazil, Gabon and Panama.

21. At the same meeting, a statement was also made by the representative of the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe.

Ministerial round tables on a "Forest-based solution for accelerating achievement of the sustainable development goals"

22. At its 3rd meeting, on 7 May, the Forum held two ministerial round tables under agenda item 3 (a) (Technical discussion and exchange of experiences on the thematic and operational priorities, priority actions and resource needs for the period 2019–2020, taking into account the review cycle of the high-level political forum on sustainable development during the biennium and the theme of the International Day of Forests). For the Chair's summary, see annex I.

23. At the same meeting, the Chair of the Forum (Malaysia), Muhammad Shahrul Ikram Yaakob, chaired and moderated the first ministerial round table.

24. Also at the same meeting, a keynote address was made by the Chief Executive Officer of the Global Environment Facility, Naoko Ishii.

25. Presentations were given by the Minister of Agriculture, Forest and Livestock of Guinea Bissau, Nicolau Dos Santos; the Vice-Minister of the State Forestry Administration of China, Peng Youdong; and the Vice-Minister for Water and Forestry of Austria, Maria Patek.

26. An interactive discussion ensued, in which comments were made and questions were posed by the representatives of Bulgaria, the Congo, Slovakia, Romania, Pakistan, Kenya and the Plurinational State of Bolivia.

27. Also at the 3rd meeting, the Assistant Deputy Minister for Natural Resources of Canada, Beth MacNeil, moderated the second ministerial round table, and made a statement.

28. Presentations were given by the Minister for Lands and Natural Resources of Ghana, John Peter Amewu; the Deputy Minister of Agriculture of Czechia, Patrik Mlynar; and the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries, Physical Planning, Natural Resources and Co-operatives of Saint Lucia, Ezechiel Joseph.

29. An interactive discussion ensued, in which comments were made and questions were posed by the representatives of Madagascar, Thailand, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Germany, the Republic of Korea, Cameroon, the Russian Federation, Australia, Finland, Ecuador, the United Republic of Tanzania, Papua New Guinea, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Nepal, Uzbekistan, Lithuania, Turkey, Poland, Malaysia, Viet Nam and Argentina.

30. The representatives of FAO, and the children and youth major group, also participated in the discussion.

Panel discussions on "the contribution of forests to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies"

31. At its 4th meeting, on 8 May, the Forum held two panel discussions under agenda item 3 (a) (Technical discussion and exchange of experiences on the thematic and operational priorities, priority actions and resource needs for the period 2019–2020, taking into account the review cycle of the high-level political forum on sustainable development during the biennium and the theme of the International Day of Forests), chaired by the Vice-Chair (Czechia). For the Chair's summary, see annex I.

32. At the same meeting, presentations during the first panel discussion were given by the Chair of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, Hiroto Mitsugi; the Co-Chair of the Global Forest Expert Panel assessment on forests and water of the International Union of Forest Research Organizations, Distinguished Science Fellow of the World Agroforestry Centre in Kenya and Professor of Agroforestry at Wageningen University in the Netherlands, Meine van Noordwijk; an Expert at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences and at the European Forest Institute in Finland, David Ellison; and the President and Chief Executive Officer of Forest Trends in the United States, Michael Jenkins; as well as by the Executive Director of The Center for People and Forests and lead discussant, David Ganz.

33. An interactive discussion ensued, in which comments were made and questions were posed by the representatives of the Congo, Costa Rica, India, the State of Palestine, Pakistan, Finland, Malaysia, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Switzerland and Mexico, as well as by the observer of the European Union.

34. Also at the 4th meeting, presentations during the second panel discussion were given by the Director of the Forestry and Biodiversity Division at the Energy and Resources Institute in India, Jitendra Vir Sharma; a Professor and Head of the Department of Forest Resources Management at the University of British Columbia in Canada, Gary Bull; and an Associate Fellow at Chatham House and Associate at Green Alliance in the United Kingdom, Duncan Brack; as well as by the Executive Director of The Center for People and Forests and lead discussant, David Ganz.

35. An interactive discussion ensued, in which comments were made and questions were posed by the representatives of Australia, Ghana, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, Papua New Guinea, Senegal, the Congo, Canada, the United States and India.

36. The representative of the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity also participated in the discussion.

37. Statements were also made by the representatives of the following major groups: farmers and small forest landowners; children and youth; and the scientific and technological communities.

Panel discussion on "Power of communication for the successful implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030"

38. At its 5th meeting, on 8 May, the Forum held a panel discussion under agenda item 3 (d) (Development of the communication and outreach strategy for the strategic plan), chaired by the Vice-Chair (Brazil), who made an opening statement. For the Chair's summary, see annex I.

39. At the same meeting, a representative of Forest Communicators Networks Asia Pacific, Caroline Liou, moderated the panel discussion and gave a presentation.

40. Presentations were also given by the representative of M&C Saatchi Abel, Robert Grace; representatives of the Forest Communicators' Network, Ingwald Gschwandtl and Kai Lintunen; a representative of the United States Forest Service, Jennifer Hayes; a representative of Forest Communicators Network Africa, Jasson Kalugendo; and a representative of FAO, Peter Csoka.

Presentations on the draft communication and outreach strategy

41. Also at its 5th meeting, on 8 May, the Director and the Programme Management Officer for Forest Affairs of the secretariat of the Forum gave presentations on the draft communication and outreach strategy. For the Chair's summary, see annex I.

42. At the same meeting, comments were made by the representatives of Switzerland, India, Ukraine, Ecuador, Mexico, New Zealand, the United States, Australia, Canada, Indonesia, Japan, Colombia, the Islamic Republic of Iran and China, as well as by the observer of the European Union.

43. The representatives of the following major groups also made comments: farmers and small forest landowners, children and youth and women.

Panel discussion on the "United Nations system-wide contributions to the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030"

44. At its 9th meeting, on 10 May, the Forum held a panel discussion under agenda item 3 (c) (United Nations system-wide contributions to the implementation of the global forest goals and targets), chaired by the Vice-Chair (Czechia). For the Chair's summary, see annex I.

45. Presentations were given by the Director for Forest Economics, Policy and Products Division of FAO, Eva Muller; the Senior Policy Officer of the African Union Commission, Dampha Almami; the Director of the African Women's Network for Community Management of Forests and focal point for the women major group, Cecile Ndjebet; and a representative of the International Forestry Students' Association and focal point for the children and youth major group, Steffen Dehn.

46. An interactive discussion ensued, in which comments were made and questions were posed by the representatives of Algeria, New Zealand, Switzerland, Indonesia, the United States, Norway, the Congo, Germany, the Islamic Republic of Iran and

Ukraine, as well as by the observers of the European Union and the International Union of Forest Research Organizations.

47. A statement was made by the representative of the Economic Commission for Europe.

48. A statement was also made by the representative of the scientific and technological communities major group.

Consideration of draft Chair's summary

49. At the 10th meeting, on 11 May, following a statement by the Chair (Malaysia), statements were made by the representatives of New Zealand (also on behalf of Japan, the United States, Canada and Australia), Algeria, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the State of Palestine, Australia, the United States and Papua New Guinea, as well as by the observer of the European Union.

Chapter III
Monitoring, assessment and reporting

(a) Progress on the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030, including the United Nations forest instrument and voluntary national contributions

(b) Progress on the development of global forest indicators

50. The Forum considered agenda item 4 at its 6th meeting, on 9 May 2018. At its 9th to 11th meetings, on 10 to 11 May, the Forum considered item 4 jointly with items 3 (Implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030) and item 5 (Means of implementation). For its consideration of item 4, the Forum had before it the note by the Secretariat on monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress towards implementing the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 and the United Nations forest instrument (E/CN.18/2018/4).

51. At the 6th meeting, on 9 May, a statement was made by the representative of the secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests.

Action taken by the Forum

52. Under item 4, the Forum adopted one draft resolution (see chap. II, paras. 7–16).

Panel discussion on monitoring, assessment and reporting

53. At the same meeting, the Forum held a panel discussion under the item, chaired and moderated by the Vice-Chair (Canada).

54. Presentations were given by the Manager of Strategic Corporate Planning in the Forestry Department of Jamaica, Davia Carty; the Deputy Chief Conservator of Forests in the Kenya Forest Service, Patrick Kariuki; and the Secretary of the Committee on Forestry and Team Leader of the Statutory Bodies of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and the Forestry Department of FAO, Peter Csoka.

55. An interactive dialogue ensued, in which comments were made and questions posed by the representatives of the Philippines, India, Romania, Nigeria (on behalf of the African Group), Ghana, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Congo, Colombia, the United States of America, Nepal, New Zealand, Japan, Bangladesh, Mexico, China, Australia, Turkey, Algeria, Brazil, South Africa, Switzerland, Senegal and Argentina.

56. The observers of the European Union and the International Union of Forestry Research Organizations participated in the discussion.

57. Statements were also made by the representatives of FAO and the Economic Commission for Europe.

58. A statement was also made by the representative of the non-governmental organizations major group.

Chapter IV
Means of implementation

(a) Progress on the activities and operation of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network

(b) Guidelines for the operation of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network

(c) Measures to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network

59. The Forum considered agenda item 5 at its 7th meeting, on 9 May 2018. At its 9th to 11th meetings, on 10 to 11 May, the Forum considered item 5 jointly with item 3 (Implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030) and item 4 (Monitoring, assessment and reporting). For its consideration of the item, the Forum had before it the note by the Secretariat on means of implementation for sustainable forest management (E/CN.18/2018/5).

60. At the 7th meeting, on 9 May, following the statement by the Vice-Chair (Kenya), the representative of the Forum secretariat introduced the note by the Secretariat under the item (E/CN.18/2018/5).

61. At the same meeting, a statement was made by the Deputy Director-General for International Cooperation, State Administration of Forestry and Grassland of China, Hu Yuanhui, on the report of the expert group meeting on guidelines for the operation of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network, on behalf of the Co-Chairs of the expert group meeting.

Action taken by the Forum

62. Under item 5, the Forum adopted one draft resolution (see chap. II, paras. 7–16).

Chapter V
Emerging issues and challenges

63. In accordance with the quadrennial programme of work of the Forum for the period 2017–2020, the Forum may decide to include in the agenda of any of its sessions an item on emerging issues and challenges of global significance that are related to and/or have an impact on forests and sustainable forest management and that are urgent, unexpected and not already addressed in the agenda of the respective session.

64. For its consideration of the item, the Forum had before it the note by the Secretariat on the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 (E/CN.18/2018/2).

65. At the thirteenth session, the Forum considered agenda item 6 at its 11th meeting, on 11 May 2018, when it recalled that a discussion on emerging issues and challenges of global significance had been held as part of the technical discussion and exchange of experiences under item 3 at its 2nd meeting, on 7 May (see chap. II, paras. 7–16).

Chapter VI
Trust fund for the United Nations Forum on Forests

66. The Forum considered agenda item 7 at its 8th meeting, on 10 May 2018. For its consideration of the item, the Forum had before it the note by the Secretariat on the trust fund for the United Nations Forum on Forests (E/CN.18/2018/7).

67. At its 8th meeting, on 10 May, the Forum heard an introductory statement by the representative of the Forum secretariat.

Chapter VII
Information on intersessional activities

68. The Forum considered agenda item 8 at its 2nd meeting, on 7 May 2018, as part of the technical discussion and exchange of experiences under item 3, and at its 11th meeting, on 11 May. For its consideration of the item, the Forum had before it the notes by the secretariat on the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 (E/CN.18/2018/2) and the contribution of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and its members, regional and subregional organizations and processes, major groups and other stakeholders to the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 (E/CN.18/2018/3).

Chapter VIII
Progress on the implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33

69. The Forum considered agenda item 9 jointly with agenda item 3 (Implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030) at its 2nd meeting, on 7 May 2018, and at its 11th meeting, on 11 May. For its consideration of the item, the Forum had before it the report of the Secretary-General on progress in the implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33 (E/CN.18/2018/6).

70. At its 2nd meeting, on 7 May, the Forum heard an introductory statement by the representative of the Forum secretariat.

Action taken by the Forum

71. Under item 9, the Forum took note of the report of the Secretary-General (see chap. I, sect. C, decision 13/102).

Chapter IX

Information on the reform of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs pertaining to the United Nations Forum on Forests

72. The Forum, at its 2nd meeting, on 7 May 2018, adopted its provisional agenda for the session as contained in document E/CN.18/2018/1, with the addition of a new agenda item, as orally proposed by Switzerland, in accordance with rule 8 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, entitled "Information on the reform of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs pertaining to the United Nations Forum on Forests" (see chap. XIII, sect. C).

73. The Forum, at its 3rd meeting, on 7 May, upon the proposal of the Bureau, decided to consider the new agenda item 10 on 9 May 2018 (see chap. XIII, sect. C).

74. The Forum considered agenda item 10 at its 6th and 11th meetings, on 9 and 11 May.

75. At its 6th meeting, on 9 May, a statement was made by the Chief of Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs.

Chapter X
Date and venue for the fourteenth session of the Forum

76. The Forum considered agenda item 11 at its 11th meeting, on 11 May 2018. For its consideration of the item, the Forum had before it a draft decision entitled "Date and venue of the fourteenth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests" (E/CN.18/2018/L.2).

Action taken by the Forum

77. Under item 11, the Forum adopted the draft decision (see chap. I, sect. C, decision 13/101).

Chapter XI
Provisional agenda for the fourteenth session of the Forum

78. The Forum considered agenda item 12 at its 11th meeting, on 11 May 2018. For its consideration of the item, the Forum had before it a draft proposal entitled "Provisional agenda for the fourteenth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests" (E/CN.18/2018/L.1).

Action taken by the Forum

79. At the 11th meeting, on 11 May, the Secretary of the Forum orally revised the provisional agenda for its fourteenth session by including the new agenda item 10, "Information on the reform of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs pertaining to the Forum on Forests" and renumbering the subsequent agenda items.

80. At the same meeting, the Forum adopted the provisional agenda for its fourteenth session, as orally revised, for submission to the Economic and Social Council at its 2018 session (see chap. I, sect. A).

Chapter XII
Adoption of the report of the Forum on its thirteenth session

81. The Forum considered agenda item 13 at its 11th meeting, on 11 May 2018. For its consideration of the item, the Forum had before it the draft report on its thirteenth session (E/CN.18/2018/L.3).

Action taken by the Forum

82. At the 11th meeting, on 11 May, the Rapporteur (Brazil) introduced the draft report. Subsequently, the Forum adopted the draft report and entrusted the Rapporteur with its finalization in collaboration with the secretariat, for submission to the Economic and Social Council at its 2018 session.

Chapter XIII
Organization of the session

A. Opening and duration of the session

83. The United Nations Forum on Forests held its thirteenth session at United Nations Headquarters on 5 May 2017 and from 7 to 11 May 2018. The Forum held 11 plenary meetings (1st to 11th).

84. At the 1st meeting, on 5 May 2017, the Chair pro tempore and Chair of the twelfth session of the Forum, Peter Besseau (Canada), opened the thirteenth session.

85. At the 2nd meeting, on 7 May 2018, the Chair of the thirteenth session, Muhammad Shahrul Ikram Yaakob (Malaysia), resumed the session and made an opening statement.

86. At the same meeting, the President of the Economic and Social Council, Marie Chatardová (Czechia), addressed the Forum.

87. Also at the same meeting, opening statements were made by the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Liu Zhenmin, and the Director of the Forum secretariat, Manoel Sobral Filho.

88. At the 3rd meeting, on 7 May 2018, the Chair of the sixty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women, Geraldine Byrne Nason (Ireland), made a statement.

B. Election of officers

89. At its 1st meeting, on 5 May 2017, the Forum elected, by acclamation, Muhammad Shahrul Ikram Yaakob (Malaysia) as Chair and Macharia Kamau (Kenya), Tomas Krejzar (Czechia), Luciana Melchert Saguas Presas (Brazil) and Maureen Whelan (Canada) as Vice-Chairs of the thirteenth session.

90. At the 2nd meeting, on 7 May 2018, the Forum elected, by acclamation, Koki Muli Grignon (Kenya) to complete the term of office of Macharia Kamau (Kenya).

91. At the same meeting, the Forum appointed Luciana Melchert Saguas Presas (Brazil) to serve concurrently as Rapporteur of the thirteenth session.

C. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

92. At the 2nd meeting, on 7 May 2018, the Forum adopted its provisional agenda for the session as contained in document E/CN.18/2018/1, with the addition of a new agenda item, as orally proposed by Switzerland, in accordance with rule 8 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, entitled "Information on the reform of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs pertaining to the United Nations Forum on Forests". The agenda, as amended, read as follows:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030:

(a) Policy dialogue on the thematic and operational priorities, priority actions and resource needs for the period 2017–2018, taking into account the review cycle of the high-level political forum on sustainable development during the biennium and the theme of the International Day of Forests;

(b) Voluntary announcement of voluntary national contributions;

(c) United Nations system-wide contributions to the implementation of the global forest goals and targets;

(d) Development of the communication and outreach strategy for the strategic plan.

4. Monitoring, assessment and reporting:

(a) Progress on the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030, including the United Nations forest instrument and voluntary national contributions;

(b) Progress on the development of global forest indicators.

5. Means of implementation:

(a) Progress on the activities and operation of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network;

(b) Guidelines for the operation of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network;

(c) Measures to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network.

6. Emerging issues and challenges.

7. Trust fund for the United Nations Forum on Forests.

8. Information on intersessional activities.

9. Progress on the implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33.

10. Information on the reform of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs pertaining to the Forum on Forests.

11. Date and venue for the fourteenth session of the Forum.

12. Provisional agenda for the fourteenth session of the Forum.

13. Adoption of the report of the Forum on its thirteenth session.

93. Also at its 2nd meeting, the Forum approved the provisional organization of work for the session, as circulated in an informal paper in English only, on the understanding that it might be further revised, as warranted.

94. At the 3rd meeting, on 7 May 2018, the Forum, upon the proposal of the Bureau, decided to consider the new agenda item 10 on 9 May 2018.

D. Attendance

95. *In accordance with paragraph 4 of Economic and Social Council resolution* 2000/35, the Forum is composed of all States Members of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies, with full and equal participation. The list of participants will be issued as document E/CN.18/2018/INF/1.

E. Documentation

96. The documentation considered by the Forum at its thirteenth session is available from the website of the Forum at www.un.org/esa/forests/forum/current-session/index.html.

Annex I

Summary by the Chair of the Forum for transmittal to the high-level political forum on sustainable development, convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council at its 2018 session

Forest-based solutions for accelerating achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies

1. During the thirteenth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (7–11 May 2018), a ministerial round table explored and highlighted forest-based solutions for accelerating achievement of the interlinked Sustainable Development Goals under review by the 2018 high-level political forum on sustainable development, notably Goal 6, on water and sanitation, Goal 7, on energy, Goal 11, on human settlements, Goal 12, on sustainable consumption and production, and Goal 17, on means of implementation, as well as Goal 15, on the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, including the sustainable management of forests, which is a key foundation for the other Goals. An interactive plenary discussion also focused on the contribution of forests to transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies. The present summary reflects those discussions and constitutes the input of the Forum to the 2018 high-level political forum.

A. Key messages: areas where political guidance by the 2018 high-level political forum on sustainable development is required

2. Key messages emerging from the discussions at the thirteenth session of the Forum include the following:

(a) Forests are crucial for food, water, wood, energy, biodiversity, health and climate change. The Sustainable Development Goals can be achieved only if forests are sustainably managed and forest landscapes are restored;

(b) Halting deforestation and restoring degraded forests by 2020 (target 15.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals) requires urgent action now. Best practices and tools are available but their application must be upscaled and progress accelerated;

(c) Fragmentation in global forest governance remains a challenge. Enhanced synergies are needed across the United Nations system and beyond the Collaborative Partnership for Forests;

(d) Implementing the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 and achieving its global forest goals and targets is an effective means to accelerate achievement of all the Sustainable Development Goals.

B. Lessons learned, challenges and emerging issues related to accelerating achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and transforming to sustainable and resilient societies

3. Forests cover 30 per cent of the Earth's land area (about 4 billion ha) and are the world's most productive land-based ecosystems and essential to life on earth. When sustainably managed, forests are resilient and renewable systems which provide essential goods and services to all people and contribute to and support

resilient communities. Today, at least 1.6 billion people (25 per cent of the global population) depend on forests for subsistence, livelihood, employment and income generation.

4. While global rates of deforestation have decreased in recent years, rates in some regions are still high. Many drivers of deforestation lie outside the forest sector and are often rooted in policies that favour land uses which produce higher and more rapid financial returns, including energy, mining, transportation and, in particular, agriculture, which is responsible for 80 per cent of forest loss globally. Tackling these drivers is a major challenge for all sectors.

5. Forests are also being degraded by unsustainable and illegal logging, dependency on fuelwood, mining, swidden agriculture, invasive alien species, fragmentation and climate change, as well as by unmanaged fire, storms, pests and disease. These disturbances seriously undermine forest health, resilience and productivity. In many countries, forest degradation is a more pressing challenge than deforestation.

6. With world population projected to reach 9.6 billion by 2050, immediate solutions are needed to halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation if the livelihoods of future populations are to be maintained and enhanced. Only by accelerating progress on Sustainable Development Goal 15 can we expect to make significant progress in achieving the other Goals and transforming to sustainable and resilient societies.

Forests and ecosystems services, including water

7. Forests provide essential ecosystem services to rural and urban populations. They stabilize soils; reduce the risk of flooding, landslides and avalanches, droughts, dust storms, sandstorms and other disasters; prevent land degradation; cleanse the air; contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation; conserve biodiversity, providing habitat for 80 per cent of all terrestrial species and serving as storehouses of genetic materials for the development of medicines and improved crop strains; and have cultural, spiritual and recreational values in many regions. Forests contribute to increased rainfall and flood mitigation and, through their roots and soil, act as a filter and store and supply freshwater. Forested watersheds supply 75 per cent of the world's freshwater for farms, industry, homes and nature itself.

8. Sustainably managed forests provide a broad range of wood and non-wood forest products and offer unique opportunities to promote sustainable natural resource use through their production, consumption and replanting. While the benefits to people of forest products, particularly wood products, are generally reflected in national and international markets, the values of water and other ecosystem services often are not. This results in the conversion of forests to what are thought to be more profitable land uses. Available data suggest that the value of the services provided by forest ecosystems globally may be as much as $16 trillion annually. The challenge is to fully capture the value of such services in markets and public policies at all levels.

Forests and energy

9. Forests are a critical source of bioenergy and play an essential role in creating options for affordable and clean energy, particularly in developing countries. Energy from wood is the single most important source of renewable energy, representing 9 per cent of the total primary energy supply worldwide, 27 per cent of the supply in Africa, and about 80 per cent of the energy derived globally from renewable sources. An estimated 2.4 billion people depend on forests for cooking and heating. Nearly 90 per cent of all fuelwood and charcoal are consumed by the rural poor, particularly in Africa and Asia, where fuelwood collection is increasingly degrading forests and

smoke from fires is affecting health, which in turn adds to human hardship. Since the demand for forest-based biofuels is projected to rise sharply with population growth, the challenge is to find renewable and sustainable wood-based solutions as well as wood energy alternatives to meet the basic needs of rural populations.

Sustainable consumption and production of forest products

10. About 30 per cent of forests are used primarily or partially for the production of industrial roundwood for national consumption and international trade. Forests provide the raw material for a wide variety of everyday products, including paper, packaging and construction materials, which are widely recyclable and contribute to a green economy, including the shelter of an estimated 1.3 billion people. Planted forests play an increasingly important role in balancing competing needs for forest goods and ecosystem services and contribute to alleviating the pressure on natural forests. Substitution of fossil resources by renewable wood materials, products and energy from sustainably managed forests are vital in the transition to a low-carbon economy. While the area of forest under sustainable forest management is increasing, as demonstrated through certification, unsustainable and illegal harvesting remains a significant challenge in many countries, and sustainability assurance mechanisms and verification of legal and sustainable value chains of both forest and agricultural products are increasing in response to consumer demand in some markets. However, other markets continue to fuel unsustainable production, which is a major challenge.

Sustainable and resilient human settlements

11. Urban forests and trees constitute a natural infrastructure that provides multifaceted benefits to urban communities, including: cooling micro-environments and reducing energy costs; supporting clean drinking water; reducing run-off; providing wildlife habitat; and enhancing real estate values and the quality of urban life. Today, more than half the world's people live in towns and cities. By 2050, that proportion will increase to two thirds. The challenge is to integrate forest areas and trees into urban landscapes as an essential aspect of urban planning and development and improve the resilience of rural-urban interfaces, for example by preventing/combating wild fires which threaten human safety.

C. Forest-based solutions to accelerating achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and transforming to sustainable and resilient societies

12. Accelerating the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 15 and realizing the vital contribution of forests and the forest sector to other Sustainable Development Goals and sustainable and resilient societies requires urgent action now in the following closely interconnected areas.

1. Upscaling best practices and tools

The following best practices and tools are available but their application must be upscaled and progress accelerated by Governments, the private sector and civil society:

(a) Integrated landscape management approaches to land-use planning and decision-making within and across jurisdictions with regard to forests, water and other land uses in a comprehensive, participatory and transparent way to maximize long-term benefits to communities;

(b) Transboundary and regional integrated water management frameworks which look at upwind and downwind supply-side approaches to forest-water interactions to address areas of declining water supplies and restore and improve groundwater recharge;

(c) Integrated forest and landscape restoration to regain ecological functions and livelihood opportunities across deforested and degraded landscapes;

(d) Diversified agricultural systems which utilize agroforestry and silvicultural approaches in order to increase agricultural productivity and resilience, food security and local incomes, generate biomass energy co-benefits and reduce land-use competition;

(e) Promotion and verification of sustainable forest management practices and legal and sustainable value chains in agriculture and forestry commodities;

(f) Models for strengthening small-scale forest and farm producers, developing alternative livelihoods and sources of income for forest-dependent populations, and building the capacity of local communities, women and youth to participate in sustainable commodity value chains;

(g) Sound data and technical tools to calculate in financial terms the benefits of urban forestry.

2. Harnessing innovation and technology

The widespread use of innovative mechanisms and technologies will help accelerate achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and transformation to sustainable and resilient societies. Such mechanisms and technologies include:

(a) Innovative technologies for forest inventory, land-use monitoring and mapping using remote sensing to identify and assess changing forest conditions and land-use dynamics in real time;

(b) Clean energy technologies which increase the share of renewable energy, improve the energy efficiency of wood, and provide alternatives to unsustainable fuelwood collection;

(c) Improvements in wood utilization and processing technologies which improve product uses and allow for better rates of recovery, re-use and recycling;

(d) Innovative traceability mechanisms, including timber tracking technologies, which enable transparency and accountability along commodity supply chain;

(e) Emerging approaches to natural capital accounting to capture forest assets, including ecosystem service assets;

(f) Delivering various forms of renewable energy (solar, wind, biofuels and wood) in a complementary way to maximize outputs and reduce costs.

3. Transformational information, communication and education

Information systems can transform how people think and act and are powerful tools for accelerating forest-based solutions to today's global challenges, including through:

(a) Using social media and other modern communication and outreach tools to raise awareness and increase the visibility at all levels and ages and across all sectors of the multiple economic, social, environmental and cultural benefits provided by trees and forests, including in urban landscapes;

(b) Integrating forest and development issues into formal education curricula from primary school to advanced studies, with a focus on integrated and cross-sectoral approaches;

(c) Expanding and retooling forest information and monitoring systems to generate socioeconomic data about the informal forest economy, cash and non-cash value of forests and the value of local ecosystem services and non-wood forest products;

(d) Educating consumers so that buying decisions reward sustainably sourced and produced agricultural and forest commodities;

(e) Strengthening training and extension for forest owners, workers, communities, women and youth;

(f) Generating and communicating scientific information to support evidence-based policies and implementation frameworks, including on hydrologic cycles and forest-water interactions.

4. Mobilizing financial resources for sustainable forest management

Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 15, is costly and requires strong and stable institutions. Mobilizing financial resources from all sources to build capacity, in particular in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, is essential to accelerating progress now and global success by 2030. A number of options are available in this regard, innovative financial instruments and catalytic public-private partnerships among them. These include:

(a) Developing and implementing national forest financing strategies which maximize opportunities for blended finance (public and private, national and international);

(b) Strengthening national resource mobilization, including through international support to developing countries and partnerships between developed and developing countries;

(c) Developing integrated approaches to national forest finance mobilization;

(d) Offering guaranteed returns on private sector investments in sustainable forest management, sustainable agriculture and renewable forest-based biofuels;

(e) Supplementing commercial bank capital available for sustainable land practices with concessional finance to extend loan repayment periods and reduce commercial risk;

(f) "Greening" public finance by better aligning public investments in agriculture and forests and reallocating commodity subsidies to discourage forest conversion;

(g) Leveraging social capital through partnerships with foundations and philanthropic organizations;

(h) Setting up payments for ecosystem services schemes that generate predictable revenues from users and beneficiaries to directly compensate forest owners for conservation measures, and creating ecosystem markets and enabling environments for investment in such schemes.

5. Good governance

Good governance is essential to achieving all the Sustainable Development Goals and mobilizing financial resources to build the capacity needed to apply best

practices and harness innovation, technology and the power of information. Accelerated progress can be achieved when countries:

(a) Recognize tenure rights and establish clear, secure and consistent tenure arrangements with respect to forest land and resources for people, both men and women, and communities;

(b) Mainstream forest considerations into development decisions, strategies, plans and priorities at all levels and create "forest smart" policies that optimize forest benefits and contributions across sectors and authorities and minimize impacts on forests;

(c) Address cultural, socioeconomic and institutional factors that may be obstacles to achieving gender equality and empowerment of women and girls at all levels in the forest, water and energy sectors;

(d) Utilize participatory and inclusive multi-stakeholder processes and partnerships to inform decision-making, foster compromise solutions and empower civil society, in particular women and youth, to act as agents of change for realizing the full value of forests;

(e) Remove agricultural and other subsidies harmful to forests and create positive incentives for small, medium and large-scale producers to sustainably manage forests;

(f) Establish clear and consistent enabling conditions for investments in sustainable commodity production and value chains and support corporate zero deforestation commitments;

(g) Enforce laws governing and affecting the forest sector at all levels, including on eliminating illegal logging and associated trade and on wildlife trafficking.

Annex II

List of documents

Document symbol	*Agenda item*	*Title*
E/CN.18/2018/1	2	Provisional agenda and annotations
E/CN.18/2018/2	3 (a), (b), (d), 6 and 8	Note by the Secretariat on the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030
E/CN.18/2018/3	3 (c) and 8	Note by the Secretariat on the contribution of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and its members, regional and subregional organizations and processes, major groups and other stakeholders to the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030
E/CN.18/2018/4	4	Note by the Secretariat on monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress towards implementing the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030, including the United Nations forest instrument and voluntary national contributions
E/CN.18/2018/5	5	Note by the Secretariat on means of implementation for sustainable forest management
E/CN.18/2018/6	9	Report of the Secretary-General on progress in the implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33
E/CN.18/2018/7	7	Note by the Secretariat on the trust fund for the United Nations Forum on Forests
E/CN.18/2018/8	3 (a)	Letter dated 15 March 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General
E/CN.18/2018/L.1	12	Provisional agenda for the fourteenth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests
E/CN.18/2018/L.2	11	Date and venue of the fourteenth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests
E/CN.18/2018/L.3	13	Draft report on the organization of the thirteenth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests
E/CN.18/2018/INF/1		List of participants

Other relevant documentation is also available at the Forum website (www.un.org/esa/forests/forum/current-session/index.html).

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